

FAQ on Indiana Title I Preschools



Qualifications

What are the qualifications for teachers and paraprofessionals who are hired to work in a preschool program?

Preschool teachers and assistants are expected to meet the highest professional standards. Highly qualified language for core subject teachers, as defined in No Child Left Behind do not apply because preschool is not recognized as a mandatory part of Indiana's public education system. However, Indiana does grant licensure for preschool under the following assignment codes:

Assignment Code	Bulletin 400	Rules 46-47	Rules 2002	REPA
Preschool	Elementary with Special Subject; Nursery School -Nursery -Kindergarten Certificate	Early Childhood Education	Generalist: Preschool	Early Childhood Education: P-3

A school or LEA can meet the requirements of using federal funds to pay a preschool teacher if the teacher holds one of the licenses listed above. Additionally, some colleges and universities offer early childhood degree or certification programs that may meet the requirements of a highly qualified teacher.

Indiana recognized teachers who have earned or completed an early childhood course of study at an accredited college or university

Paraprofessionals are also expected to meet high professional standards. For Title I-funded paraprofessionals, that means meeting at least one of three criteria outlined in NCLB:

- (1) All Title I paraprofessionals must have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.
- (2) Additionally, except as noted below, paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002, and working in a program supported with Title I, Part A funds must have—
 - Completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; or
 - Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
 - Met a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to

FAQ on Indiana Title I Preschools



assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics (or, as appropriate, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness).

Paraprofessionals hired on or before January 8, 2002, and working in a program supported with Title I, Part A funds must meet these requirements by January 8, 2006. *[Section 1119(c) and (d) of Title I]*

Paraprofessionals who only serve as translators or who only conduct parental involvement activities must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but do not have to meet the additional requirements. *[Section 1119(e)]*

Is there a required student:teacher ratio for Title I –funded preschool programs?

There is no required student:teacher ratio for Title I-funded preschool programs. Research on highly effective programs recommends a 12:1 ratio. Sites that participate in Paths To Quality (see questions below) are required to adhere to a specific student:teacher ratio.

What is the difference between a Title I preschool program and a Head Start preschool program?

The main difference is the source of funding, although both programs are authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA).

What are the Head Start Indicators for Title I preschool programs?

The following are Head Start Performance Indicators that should be included in a Title I funded preschool:

Child Development and Education Approach for All Children

In order to help children gain the social competence, skills, and confidence necessary to be prepared to succeed in their present environment and with later responsibilities in school and life, the approach to child development and education must:

- Be developmentally and linguistically appropriate, recognizing that children have individual rates of development as well as individual interests, temperaments, languages, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles;
- Be inclusive of children with disabilities, consistent with their Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP);

FAQ on Indiana Title I Preschools



- Provide an environment of acceptance that supports and respects gender, culture, language, ethnicity and family composition;
- Provide a balanced daily program of child-initiated and adult-directed activities, including individual and small group activities; and
- Allow and enable children to independently use toilet facilities when it is developmentally appropriate and when efforts to encourage toilet training are supported by the parents.

Programs must support social and emotional development by:

- Encouraging development which enhances each child's strengths by:
 - Building trust;
 - Fostering independence;
 - Encouraging self-control by setting clear, consistent limits, and having realistic expectations;
 - Encouraging respect for the feelings and rights of others; and
 - Supporting and respecting the home language, culture, and family composition of each child in ways that support the child's health and well-being; and
- Planning for routines and transitions so that they occur in a timely, predictable and unrushed manner according to each child's needs.

Programs must provide for the development of each child's cognitive and language skills by:

- Supporting each child's learning, using various strategies including experimentation, inquiry, observation, play and exploration;
- Ensuring opportunities for creative self-expression through activities such as art, music, movement, and dialogue;
- Promoting interaction and language use among children and between children and adults; and
- Supporting emerging literacy and numeracy development through materials and activities according to the developmental level of each child.

FAQ on Indiana Title I Preschools



Programs must promote each child's physical development by:

- Providing sufficient time, indoor and outdoor space, equipment, materials and adult guidance for active play and movement that support the development of gross motor skills;
- Providing appropriate time, space, equipment, materials and adult guidance for the development of fine motor skills according to each child's developmental level; and
- Providing an appropriate environment and adult guidance for the participation of children with special needs.

Child Development and Education Approach for Preschoolers

Programs, in collaboration with the parents, must implement a curriculum that:

- Supports each child's individual pattern of development and learning;
- Provides for the development of cognitive skills by encouraging each child to organize his or her experiences, to understand concepts, and to develop age appropriate literacy, numeracy, reasoning, problem solving and decision-making skills which form a foundation for school readiness and later school success;
- Integrates all educational aspects of the health, nutrition, and mental health services into program activities;
- Ensures that the program environment helps children develop emotional security and facility in social relationships;
- Enhances each child's understanding of self as an individual and as a member of a group;
- Provides each child with opportunities for success to help develop feelings of competence, self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward learning; and
- Provides individual and small group experiences both indoors and outdoors.

Staff must use a variety of strategies to promote and support children's learning and developmental progress based on the observations and ongoing assessment of each child.

FAQ on Indiana Title I Preschools



Must a Title I preschool meet the requirements of Paths to Quality?

Paths to Quality is Indiana's Quality Rating and Improvement System. Preschool programs – both non-profit and for-profit – are encouraged to use Paths to Quality as a way to ensure quality and effectiveness in their programming. More information about Paths to Quality can be found here: <http://www.childcareindiana.org/childcareindiana/ptq.cfm>

Parent Involvement

What are the requirements for parental involvement?

Head Start Performance Indicators say that:

Parents must be:

- Invited to become integrally involved in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education;
- Provided opportunities to increase their child observation skills and to share assessments with staff that will help plan the learning experiences; and
- Encouraged to participate in staff-parent conferences and home visits to discuss their child's development and education.

Funds used for the preschool program may be used to support parent involvement activities and opportunities to meet the indicators.